

# Summary Baseline Report of PLACE Assessment in Osh, Kyrgyzstan

The Caucasus and Central Asia



## Local Investigator

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## Summary of Indicators from Assessment

<b>Baseline Results from PLACE Assessments in Osh, Kyrgyzstan</b>  <b>Partners: USAID/CAR , MEASURE/Evalutaion Project at UNC, Center for Public Opinion Study and Forecasting, Osh</b>	
<b>Characteristics</b>	
Population	300 th.
<b>Scope of Assessment</b>	
City-wide assessment	Yes
Identification of areas or “units” of city and social sites within “units” where people meet new partners and/or drug injectors socialize	Yes
Mapping of sites	Yes
Characterization of sexual and injecting networks at sites	Yes
Characterization of overlaps of sexual and injecting networks	Yes
Identification of gaps in prevention programs	Yes
<b>Step 1 Results from Focus Groups/In-Depth Interviews to Identify Areas of City Where People Go to Meet New Sexual Partners and Where IDUs can be Found</b>	
Number of Focus Group Discussions held	6
Number of In-Depth interviews held with police and IDU	15
Number of areas identified	*
<b>Step 2 Results from Key Informant Interviews Within Areas to Identify Specific Sites Where People Meet Sexual Partners or Where Drug Injectors Can be Found</b>	
Days of key informant interviewing	7
Number of interviewers	25
Number of Key informant interviews	669
Number of Key informant reports	2931
Number of sites reported in areas where KI interviewed	1545
Number of sites reported in other areas	1386
Number of unique sites reported in all areas	269
<u>Percent of Key Informants who:</u>	
Believe injecting drug use occurs in area	57%
Has seen syringes lying around in last 4 weeks in area	34%
Report sex workers solicit customers in area	68%
<u>Percent of sites reported where Key Informants believe:</u>	
People meet new sexual partners	63%
IDUs can be found	40%
Syringes can be found	31%
Where sex workers solicit customers	60%

<b>Step 3 Results from Visits to Sites Identified by Key Informants in Step 2</b> <b>Characteristics of Sites and Patrons of Sites as Reported by a “Knowledgeable Person” at the Site</b> <b>and from Interviewer Observation</b>	
Total Number of Unique Sites Named by Key Informants	269
<i>Note: Criteria for excluding sites for site verification varied by city.</i>	0
<i>Most were stairwells/roofs infrequently reported by key informants.</i>	
Number of Sites Visited, Verified, Characterized	<b>N=271</b>
<u>% of sites where Knowledgeable Person reports that:</u>	
People meet new sexual partners at site	63.9
Injection drug users can be found at site	34.7
People meet new sexual partners <u>and</u> IDUs are at site	24.8
People meet new sexual partners <u>or</u> IDUs are at site	72.3
<u>Type of site (By observation):</u>	
• Bar/Café/Restaurant	19.9
• Night club/Disco/Casino	2.2
• Sauna	8.1
• Hotel	3.0
• Billiards, Game Club/Computer Club	7.4
• Dormitory, Private Apartment, Flat	9.2
• Basement, roof, stairwells, unused abandoned building,	5.2
• School, college, technical	3.0
• Street/waste/yard	18.1
<u>Activities Onsite (By interview):</u>	
• Beer	75.7
• Hard Alcohol	78.6
• Computer games	5.9
• Eating	63.1
• Dancing	29.5
• Striptease	1.1
<u>Sexual Partnerships Formed Onsite (By interview):</u>	
• Men meet women	59.0
• Women meet men	47.6
• Men meet men	11.8
• Someone facilitates partnership formation	19.9
• Sex workers solicit	42.4
<u>Percent of sites with Patrons who are (By interview):</u>	
• Male students	72.3
• Female students	69.0
• Men under age 18	49.5
• Women under age 18	50.6
• Male IDU's	32.1
• Female IDU's	21.4
<u>Perception of how common IDU is in area (By interview):</u>	
• Very common	10.0
• Somewhat common	23.3
• Not very common	40.6
• Does not occur	26.2
• Percent who have seen used syringes lying inside or outside sites	26.9
<u>Condoms and AIDS Prevention (mostly by interview):</u>	
• % where condoms never available past 12 months	45.0
• % where condoms seen on site (observation)	17.3
• % where condoms available within 10 minutes	66.4
• % where sites willing to sell condoms	49.5
• % that ever had HIV/AIDS prevention programs	13.3
• % willing to have AIDS prevention program	80.8

<b>Step 4 Results from Interviews with People Socializing at Sites Where People Meet New Sexual Partners</b>				
<b>Characteristics of People at Sites</b>				
Number of sites where interviews conducted	<b>83</b>			
	<b>Rep Sample</b>	<b>Youth</b>	<b>CSWs / Clients</b>	<b>IDUs</b>
Number of men interviewed	<b>684</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>78</b>
<b><u>Percent of Men (age 18 and older) Socializing at Sites Who:</u></b>				
• Are 18-24	23.2	87.1	32.5	29.8
• Are married or living in union	65.1	24.1	45.7	32.0
• Employed fulltime	42.5	24.1	45.1	12.9
• Are students	11.0	32.6	13.9	6.7
• Visit the site every day	26.5	21.4	17.7	19.7
• Believe people meet new sexual partners at site	66.2	68.4	80.6	73.0
• Have ever attracted a new sexual partner at the site	26.2	34.8	60.0	48.9
- Of those, used a condom with most recent partner from site	57.6	60.1	69.5	56.2
• Have a condom with them that was seen by interviewer	4.4	5.9	9.1	5.6
<b><u>Rate of Partnerships:</u></b>				
• Had a new sexual partner in the past 4 weeks	28.2	37.4	58.3	42.1
- Of those, used a condom with most recent new partner	62.6	65.3	68.6	60.1
• Had a new sexual partner in the past 12 months	51.5	62.6	93.1	73.0
• Have a current steady partner	73.7	43.9	70.9	52.8
• Have had sex with a man in the past four weeks	1.6	1.1	5.1	5.6
• Given money or gifts in exchange for sex in the past 3 months	25.6	33.7	100.0	33.7
<b><u>Percent of Men Socializing at Sites Who:</u></b>				
• Believe drug use is very common in area	9.9	10.7	5.7	17.4
• Believe that IDU's socialize at site of interview	51.2	59.9	64.6	88.8
• Have ever injected drugs	26.0	35.8	34.3	100.0
Of those who have injected drugs				
• Percent who shared a needle the last time he injected	--	--	--	30.9
Number of women interviewed	<b>643</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>33</b>
<b><u>Percent of Women Socializing at Sites Who:</u></b>				
• Are 18-24	40.9	87.1	71.8	45.5
• Are married or living in union	45.9	18.2	9.8	21.2
• Employed fulltime	29.1	11.9	4.3	0.0
• Are students	11.0	20.5	9.4	3.0
• Visit the site every day	36.4	26.5	29.4	9.1
• Believe people meet new sexual partners at site	70.5	77.5	93.7	81.8
• Have ever attracted a new sexual partner at the site	39.8	62.3	89.8	72.7
- Of those, used a condom with most recent partner from site	75.6	81.4	81.2	41.7
• Have a condom with them that was seen by interviewer	9.5	12.6	20.0	18.2
<b><u>Rate of Partnerships:</u></b>				
• Had a new sexual partner in the past 4 weeks	42.8	67.2	94.9	78.8
- Of those, used a condom with most recent new partner	85.8	90.0	89.3	61.6
• Had a new sexual partner in the past 12 months	45.4	67.2	100.0	90.9
• Have a current steady partner	60.2	41.4	36.5	39.4
• Received money or gifts in for sex in the past 3 months	39.7	66.2	100.0	66.7
<b><u>Percent of Women Socializing at Sites Who:</u></b>				
• Believe drug use is very common in area	11.2	8.9	10.6	36.4
• Believe that IDU's socialize at site of interview	33.1	31.5	35.3	90.9
• Have ever injected drugs	5.1	6.3	8.6	100.0
Of those who have injected drugs				
• Percent who shared a needle the last time she injected	--	--	--	15.2

## Background and Objectives

### A. The HIV epidemic in Kyrgyzstan

By December of 2001, Kyrgyzstan had reported a total of 386 cases of HIV infection. The number of infected people living in Kyrgyzstan today is unknown. Epidemiologists expect that the infection may be currently concentrated in injecting drug users, but it is likely that the epidemic could quickly spread to the general population unless prevention action is taken immediately.

### B. Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE)

The PLACE method identifies areas likely to have a higher incidence of HIV and specific sites within these high transmission areas (HTAs) where AIDS prevention programs could reach those most likely to transmit infection. The PLACE method is appropriate for Central Asia because the epidemic is concentrated in certain geographic areas.

The first step in the PLACE Method is to identify HTAs using available demographic, socio-economic, and qualitative information. The second step is to ask key informants in each HTA to name places where injection drug users can be found and places where people meet new lovers, boyfriends, girlfriends or one night only sexual partners. The third step is to locate and describe all the sites named by key informants. The fourth step is to conduct interviews with people socializing at a sample of sites to learn about their demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics. The final step is to provide recommendations to intervention groups.

### C. Objectives of the PLACE study in Osh

The objectives of the PLACE study in Osh were to:

- Identify sites where injection drug users socialize
- Identify sites where people, including commercial sex workers, meet new sexual partners
- Describe the social and behavioral characteristics of people at these sites
- Assess the extent that youth who visit these sites inject drugs and have new sexual partners
- Identify priority sites for HIV intervention programs
- Provide site-based indicators for monitoring of interventions

### D. Organization of the PLACE study in Osh

This study was conducted by the Center for Public Opinion Study and Forecasting in Osh. USAID provided funding through The MEASURE *Evaluation* Project. Results were shared with USAID, PSI, the Soros Foundation, Prodruga, UNAIDS, the City AIDS Center, and other organizations.

## **Step 1: Identifying areas for assessment in Osh**

### **A. Objective**

The objective of this step was to identify high transmission areas in Osh.

### **B. Methods**

Osh is divided into 20 groups of polling precincts for administrative purposes. Focus groups and in-depth interviews were conducted to identify which units were likely to be high transmission areas. Focus groups participants, including commercial sex workers, injection drug users, physicians, taxi drivers, and youth, were asked where people were most likely to go to meet new sexual partners, where sex workers were most likely to solicit clients, and where injection drug users were most likely to be found. In-depth interviews were also conducted to identify areas.

### **C. Results**

Since there was little information about where new sexual partnerships are formed or where injection drug users socialize, the entire city of Osh was included in the PLACE assessment.

## Step 2: Key Informant Interviews

### A. Objectives

The objective of this step was to identify all sites in the city where injecting drug users can be reached and where people meet new sexual partners.

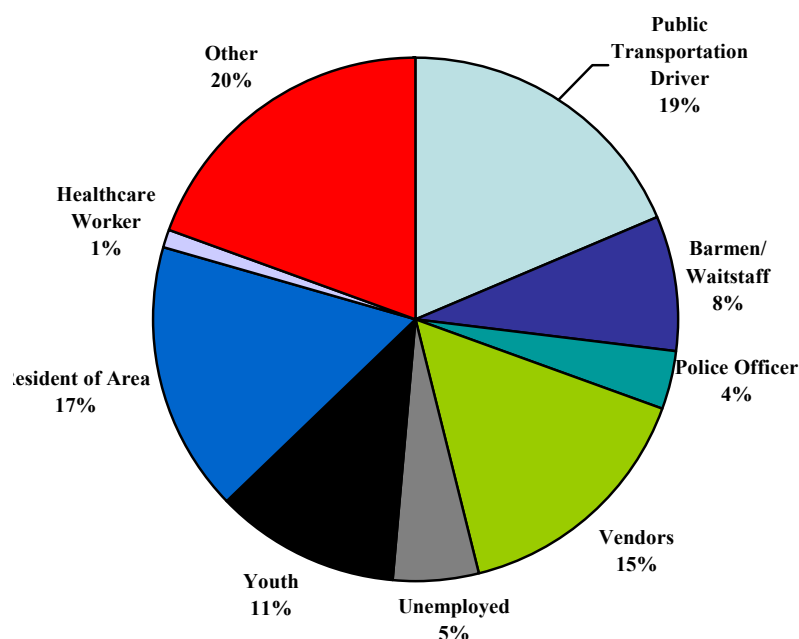
### B. Methods

Key informants in each area were asked to name sites in the area where people meet new sexual partners, where sex workers solicit clients, or where injection drug users can be found. Key informant reports were compiled into a master list of sites.

### C. Results

Twenty-five interviewers conducted 669 key informant interviews in seven days. On average, each informant named 4.4 sites. There were 2,931 site reports and 269 unique sites. Slightly more than half of the key informants were male. Adults age 18 and older of all types were interviewed. Youth, vendors, public transportation drivers, barmen and waiters, and area residents were the most common types of key informants (Figure 2). -

**Figure 2. Distribution of Key Informants by Type**



## Step 3: Site Visits

### A. Objectives

The objective of this step was to describe the characteristics of sites named by key informants.

### B. Methods

An interview team was assigned to each unit and given a list of sites inside the unit to visit and describe. All reported sites were verified. The interview team obtained site coordinates using hand-held Geographic Positioning System (GPS) units. The team also questioned a responsible party at each site about characteristics of the site relevant to HIV prevention.

### B. Results

Interviews were conducted at 271 sites meeting the eligibility criteria over a period of two days. No interviews were declined.

#### Site characteristics

The most common types of sites were bars, cafés, and restaurants and streets (Figure 3). Alcohol was consumed at the majority of sites. Other popular activities included dining, listening to music, and dancing.

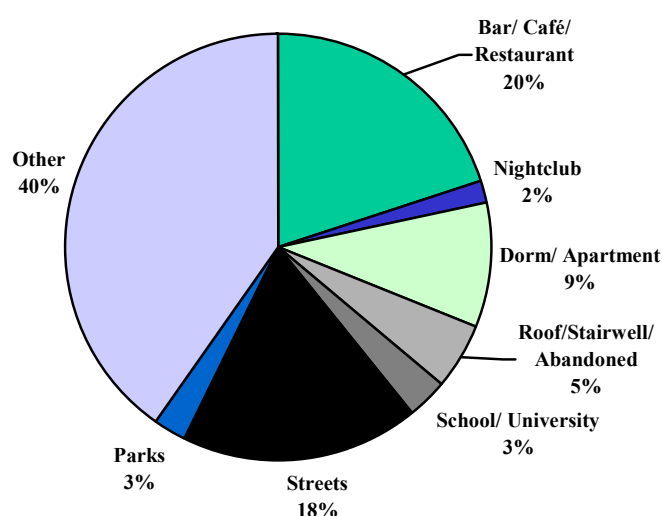
#### Site visitor characteristics

Many respondents reported that site visitors lived within a ten-minute walk, visited the site at least once a week, were students, and/or consumed alcohol at the site. Respondents at 59% of sites reported that men met new female sexual partners at the site. Forty-two percent reported that sex workers solicited clients. Twelve percent reported that men met new male (gay) sexual partners.

#### Injection drug use

One-third of the respondents thought that injection drug use was “very common” or “somewhat common” in the area. One quarter thought that injection drug use did not occur in the area. Thirty-five percent of the respondents reported that injection drug users socialized at the site. Twenty-six percent said that they had seen used syringes at the site during the three months prior to the interview. Interviewers saw used syringes at 8% of the sites.

**Figure 3. Type of Site**



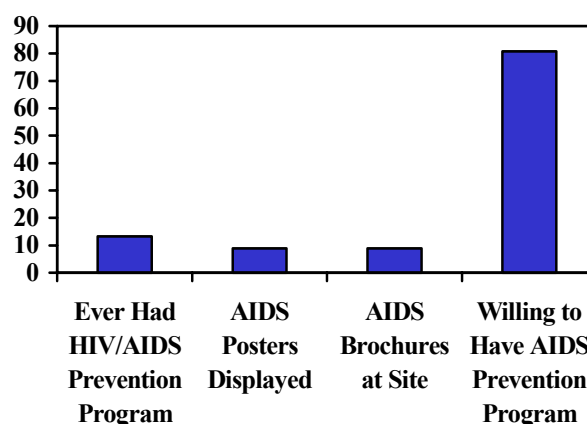


### HIV prevention activities

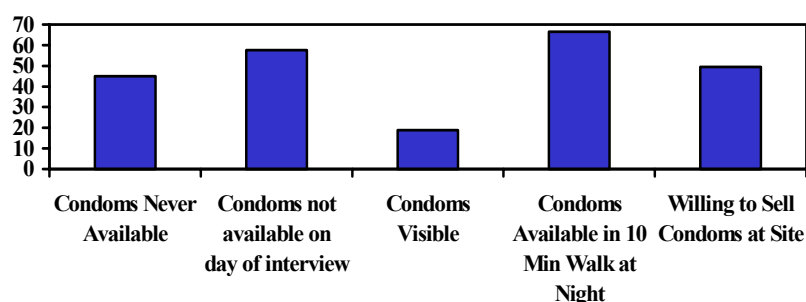
Site-based AIDS prevention activities were rare (Figure 4). Only 13% of respondents reported that HIV prevention activities had ever occurred at the site. HIV posters and brochures were displayed at 9% of the sites. Over 80% of respondents were willing to have HIV educational programs at their sites.

Interviewers saw condoms at only 19% of the sites (Figure 5). Fifty-eight percent of respondents reported that condoms were not available on the day of interview, and 45% reported that condoms had never been available during the twelve months preceding the interview. Half of respondents were willing to sell condoms at their site. Two-thirds said that it was possible for someone to find a condom within 10 minutes of leaving the site at night.

**Figure 4. AIDS Educational Activities at all Sites**



**Figure 5. Condom availability at all Sites**



## **Step 4: Interviews with people socializing at sites**

### **A. Objective**

The objective of this step was to describe the demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics of site visitors.

### **B. Methods**

Interviews were conducted with people socializing at a random sample of sites. In addition, interviews were conducted at sites named by 15 or more key informants but not selected in the random sample. These sites were considered important potential intervention sites.

An interview team visited each site and selected a sample of people to interview. The goal was to interview 1,200 people in total, including 200 injection drug users and 200 commercial sex

workers. Ten people were interviewed at small sites, 20 people at medium-sized sites, and 30 people at large sites. Interviewers tried to obtain a representative sample at a site by using the following strategies:

- Not approaching more than one person from a group of people socializing together;
- Numbering the people at a site and identifying potential respondents using numeric intervals;
- Approaching individuals at different locations within a site.

### C. Results

Interviews were conducted at 31% of the sites that were visited (Table 2). It took 59 interviewers 6 days to complete the interviews. The target number of interviews was obtained and oversampling of risk-groups was not necessary to reach the target numbers. Results are reported separately for the representative sample and three high-risk groups: youth, commercial sex workers and their clients, and injection drug users.

**Table 2. Summary of Individual Interviews Field Work**

Number of Sites Visited for Individual Interviews	83	
% of Verified Sites Visited	30.6%	
Number of Days of Interviews	6	
Number of Interviewers	59	
<i>Numbers Interviewed</i>	<b>M</b>	<b>W</b>
Total	684	643
Representative Sample	684	643
Youth	187	302
CSWs and Clients	175	255
IDUs	178	33

#### ***Part 1: Representative Sample of People Socializing at All Sites***

The representative sample includes everyone interviewed.

#### ***Sociodemographic Characteristics***

Slightly more than half of the people interviewed were men. The average age of male visitors (31.8 years) was higher than that of females (28.7 years). Over 90% of men and women were residents of Osh, and 58% of men but only 36% of women had lived in Osh for their entire lives. Men were more likely than women to be married (65% vs. 46%), employed full-time (43% vs. 29%) and have higher education (39% vs. 34%) and slightly less likely to have slept outside the city in the past three months (56% vs. 63%). Eleven percent of men and women had been currently students.

#### ***Social and Sexual Behavior***

Many men and women reported that they visited the site of interview on a regular basis; 27% of men and 36% of women said that they came every day. Approximately 70% of men and women believed that people came to the interview site to meet a new sexual partner. In fact, 26% of men and 40% of women said that they had personally met a new sexual partner at the site.

Approximately half of men (52%) and 70% of women had had at least one sexual partner in the four weeks prior to the interview. More women (43%) than men (28%) had had at least one new sexual partner during the same period. Approximately one-quarter of men reported giving money in exchange for sex during the past 3 months. The proportion of women who had received money in exchange for sex was 40%.

Three-quarters of men (74%) and almost two-thirds of women (60%) reported that they had had a regular sexual partner during the 12 months prior to the interview. Of these, 46% of men and 33% of women reported that they had had at least one new partner in addition to their regular partner during this period.

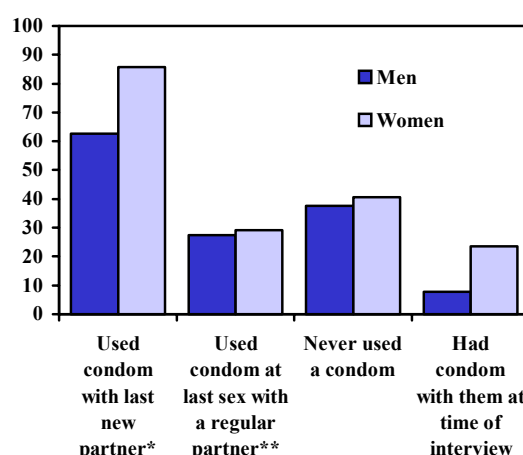
Men rarely reported having sex with another man during the four weeks prior to the interview (2%).

### Condom Use

Sixty-two percent of men and 59% of women said that they had used a condom. Most women (86%) and 63% of men who had had a new partner in the last four weeks reported using a condom with their last new partner (Figure 6). Modest proportions of men (27%) and women (29%) who had a regular partner reported using a condom during the last sexual act with that partner. Approximately 8% of men and 24% of women had a condom with them at the time of the interview.

Men most frequently reported obtaining condoms from kiosks and pharmacies. Women reported that they obtained condoms from pharmacies or from their partners.

**Figure 6. Condom use by gender**



\*Among individuals with at least 1 new partner in past 4 weeks

\*\*Among individuals with a regular partner

### HIV Knowledge

Approximately 13% of men and 22% of women had attended an HIV educational session in the 12 months prior to the interview. Over 90% of men and women knew that HIV can be transmitted by sharing needles or by sexual contact without a condom. However, only 73% of men and 70% of women identified condom use as a way to reduce their personal risk of HIV infection. Only 58% of men and 50% of women knew that using sterile needles is another way to prevent infection. Less than half of men and women knew that a person who looks healthy can be infected with HIV.

Less than a quarter of men and a third of women interviewed had been tested for HIV in the 12 months prior to the interview. Only 22% of men and 37% of women tested had done so voluntarily.

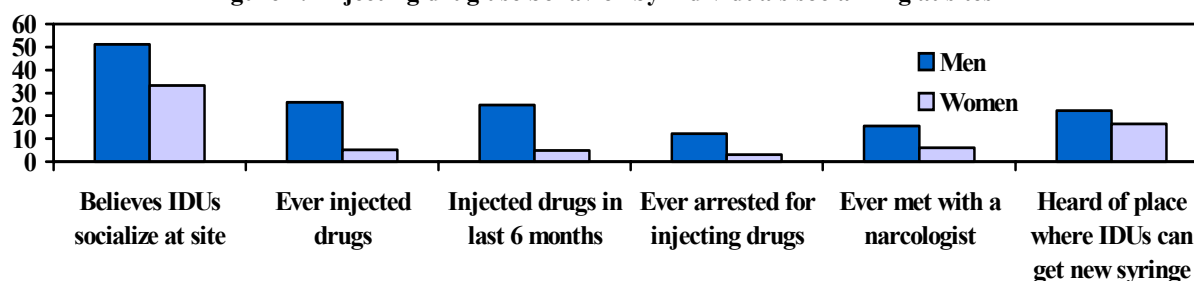
### Injection drug use

Approximately 38% of men and 31% of women reported that injection drug use was “very common” or “somewhat common” in the unit where they were interviewed. Less than 3% of respondents thought that drug use did not occur in the unit. About 30% of men and 43% of women said that they did not know. Over half of the men and a third of women thought that injection drug users socialized at the interview site (Figure 7).

Approximately 26% of men reported that they had ever injected drugs, while only 5% of women had done so. Of these, 95% of men and women had used injection drugs during the past six

months. Twelve percent of men and 3% of women had been arrested for drug use. Twenty-two percent of men and 17% of women had heard of a place in the city where injection drug users could get new syringes.

Figure 7. Injecting drug use behavior by individuals socializing at sites



## Part 2: Youth

Youth aged 18 to 25 years were examined as a separate group. Only 27% of men and 47% of women in the representative sample were youth. Results that differed from the representative sample are emphasized here.

### Youth: Sociodemographic Characteristics

Twenty-four percent of male youth and 18% of female youth were married. Only 24% of men and 12% of women were employed full-time. One third of the men and 21% of women were currently students. Only one third of female youth had lived in Osh their entire life compared to almost two thirds of men. Almost half of female youth (45%) had lived in Osh less than 5 years and 70% had spent at least one night outside of the city in the past 3 months.

### Youth: Social and Sexual Behavior

Most male (68%) and female (78%) youth believed that people came to the site to meet new sexual partners. One-third of male (35%) and 62% of female youth had personally met a new partner at the site. Only 37% of male youth but 67% female youth reported that they had had a new sexual partner in the 4 weeks preceding the interview. Only 44% of male youth and 41% of female youth said that they had had a regular sex partner in the past 12 months.

One-third of male youth had given money in exchange for sex in the 3 months prior to the interview. Two-thirds of female youth said that they had received money in exchange for sex during the same period.

Only 1% of male youth reported having sex with another man in the four weeks preceding the interview.

### Youth: HIV Knowledge and Prevention

Only 13% of male youth and 24% of female youth had attended an AIDS education session during the three months prior to the interview. Nearly all youth were aware that unprotected sex and needle sharing were risk factors for HIV transmission. Smaller proportions identified using condoms and avoiding needle sharing as ways to reduce personal risk. Two-thirds of male

youth and 90% of female youth had used condoms with their last new sexual partner. Smaller proportions had used condoms with their last regular sexual partners.

### Youth: Injection drug use

Sixty percent of male youth and 32% of female youth thought that injection drug users socialized at the interview site. Male youth (36%) were much more likely than female youth (6%) to report that they had ever used injection drugs. Among those who had ever injected drugs, almost 95% of male and female youth had done so in the past 6 months.

## **Part 3: Commercial Sex Workers and Clients**

Commercial sex workers were defined as women who reported receiving money in exchange for sex in the 3 months prior to the interview. Clients were defined as men who reported giving money or other gifts in exchange for sexual services during the same period. Approximately 40% of the women interviewed were commercial sex workers and 26% of the men were clients. Results that differed from the representative sample are emphasized here.

### CSWs and Clients: Sociodemographic Characteristics

Over 90% of CSWs were under the age of 25 and 18% were married. Only 4% reported that they were employed full-time; 43% reported that they were unemployed but not looking for work. Less than 10% were currently students. The average CSW was 23 years old, while the average client was 30 years. Forty-six percent of clients were married.

### Clients and CSWs: Social and Sexual Behavior

Over 80% of clients and 94% of CSWs thought that people came to the interview site to meet new sexual partners. In fact, 60% of clients and nearly all of the CSWs (94%) had met a new sexual partner at the site. The majority of CSWs visited the site of interview more than once a week. Most CSWs went to only one or two sites to solicit clients.

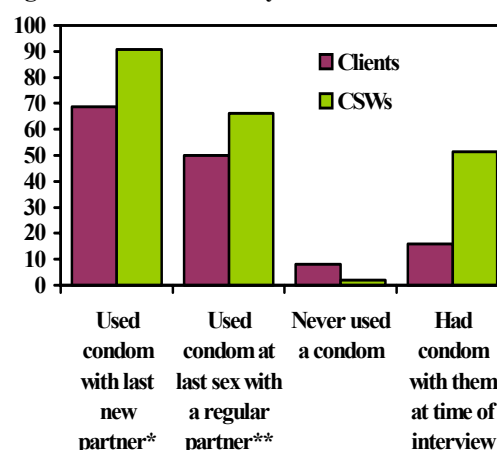
Approximately 58% of CSWs had 4 or more new sexual partners in the 4 weeks preceding the interview. Seventy-three percent had had 15 or more new partners during the past 12 months. About one-third of the CSWs interviewed said that they had a regular sexual partner.

Fifty-eight percent of the clients reported that they had had a new partner in the 4 weeks prior to the interview, and 70% had had 4 or more new partners in the past 12 months. Five percent of clients reported that they had recently had sex with another man.

### CSWs and Clients: Condom use

Condom use was high among CSWs and their clients (Figure 8). Less than 8% of clients had never used a condom. A large proportion (63%) of clients who had a new partner in the past 4 weeks used a condom with the last new partner. Half of clients with regular partners reported using a condom at last sex with that partner.

Figure 8. Condom use by CSWs and clients



\*Among individuals with at least 1 new partner in past 4 weeks  
 \*\*Among individuals with a regular partner

Only 2% of CSWs had never used a condom. Approximately 91% had used a condom with their last new partner. Two-thirds also used a condom at last sex with a regular partner.

Approximately 16% of clients and 51% of CSWs had a condom at the time of the interview. CSWs were likely to depend on their partners to provide condoms.

#### CSWs and Clients: HIV Knowledge

One-quarter of CSWs and only 9% clients had attended an HIV education session in the 3 months prior to the interview. Eighty-seven percent of CSWs and clients knew that condom use is a way to reduce the risk of getting HIV. Half of CSWs had been tested for HIV in the past 12 months. Almost half (48%) had done so voluntarily. Only one quarter of clients had been tested.

#### Clients and CSWs: Injection Drug Use

Two-thirds of clients thought that injection drug users socialized at the interview site, while only 35% of CSWs did. Approximately 34% of clients said that they had ever used injection drugs; of these, 92% had done so in the past six months. Approximately 9% of CSWs reported that they had used injected drugs. Of CSWs who had ever injected drugs, 92% had done so within the past 6 months.

### **Part 4: Injection Drug Users**

An IDU was defined as someone who reported that they had used injection drugs in the 6 months preceding the interview. Eighty-four percent of the IDUs interviewed were men. Because only 33 female IDUs were interviewed, much of the analysis will be restricted to male IDUs. Results that differed from the representative sample are emphasized here.

#### IDUs: Sociodemographic Characteristics

The average age of male IDUs was 28.1 years. Approximately 32% of male IDUs were married, and 12% were employed full-time. Only 7% were students and 27% had at least some higher education.

#### IDUs: Social and Sexual Behavior

Almost 85% of male IDUs visited the site of interview at least once a week. Most male (73%) and female (82%) IDUs thought that people came to the site to meet new sexual partners. In fact, 49% of male IDUs and 73% of female IDUs had met a new partner at the site. Approximately 56% of male IDUs had at least one sexual partner in the past 4 weeks; of these, 76% had at least one new partner during this period. Half of male IDUs had a regular sex partner. One third of male IDUs paid for sex during the 3 months prior to the interview. Two-thirds of the 33 female IDUs interviewed said they had received money in exchange for sex during the past 3 months. Few (6%) male IDUs reported recent sex with another man.

#### IDUs: HIV Knowledge and Prevention

Less than 15% of male IDUs attended an AIDS educational session in the past year. Male IDUs were likely to identify using sterile needles as a way to reduce the risk of getting HIV. Sixty-one percent of the male IDUs with a new partner in the past 4 weeks used a condom with the last new partner. Approximately 49% of male IDUs with a regular partner used a condom at last sex.

with a regular partner. Thirty-nine percent of male IDUs had been tested for HIV in the past year.

### IDUs: Injection Drug Use

Almost two-thirds of male IDUs (62%) said that injection drug use was “very common” or “somewhat common” in the unit where the interview took place. No male IDUs reported that injection drug use did not occur in the unit. Almost 90% thought that other IDUs socialized at the interview site.

Heroin was the most commonly reported drug by two-thirds of male IDUs. Raw opium was reported by one-third of male IDUs. Most had used drugs for years but 28% reported injecting for less than one year. One third of male IDUs reported taking drugs alone; 24% always taking drugs with the same group; for one-third, the main way to take drugs depended on the circumstances.

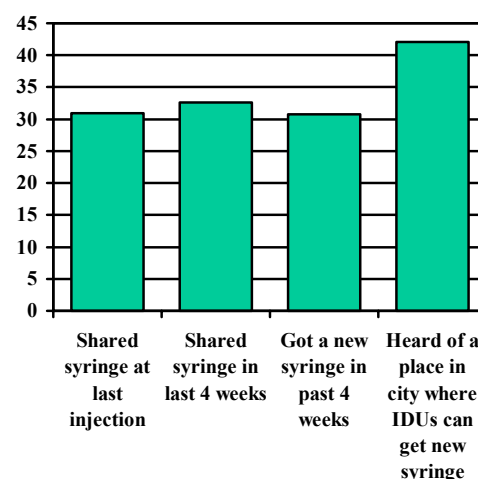
Over 70% of male IDUs had injected drugs in the previous 7 days; about 70% the day before. Those who injected the previous day did so 1.9 times, on average.

In the 4 weeks preceding the interview, 61% of male IDUs took drugs from a common reservoir, and 45% used a ready made drug solution without boiling. Thirty-one percent of male IDUs shared a syringe at last injection, and 33% had shared a syringe in the past 4 weeks (Figure 9). Almost one-third of male IDUs had obtained a new syringe in the last 4 weeks. Over 40% had heard of a place in the city where IDUs can get new syringes. Approximately 30% of male IDUs said that they had obtained their last syringe from a pharmacy, 24% had purchase one elsewhere, and 19% had obtained their last syringe from a trust point. Half said that they could always get a new syringe whenever they wanted. Male IDUs frequently cited a lack of money and exchange station too far away as obstacles to obtaining new syringes.

### IDUs: Arrests and registration

Over 40% of male IDUs had been arrested for injecting drugs. Of these, 51% thought they had been registered with the police and 89% of these thought they were registered as IDUs. Almost half of male IDUs had met a narcologist or visited a narcologist dispensary.

**Figure 9. Needle sharing and use by male IDUs**



## **Step 5: Summary and Recommendations**

**Sexual and injection drug use networks are extensive and diffuse. There is significant overlap among groups at high risk for HIV infection.**

This study identified 270 unique sites in Osh where people at high risk of HIV infection socialize. There was significant overlap among groups at high risk, including youth, injection drug users, and commercial sex workers and their clients.

**The rate of new partnership formation is high. A large proportion of men visit sex workers.**

Over 27% of men and 40% of women interviewed at sites reported at least one new partner during the past 4 weeks. Approximately one-quarter of men had given money in exchange for sex during the 3 months prior to the interview.

**Commercial sex work is common, especially by young women.**

Two-thirds of female youth interviewed had received money in exchange for sex during the 3 months prior to the interview. The majority of these young women had lived in Osh less than 5 years and had slept outside of the city at least once in the past 3 months. Only 12% were employed fulltime.

**Condom use is high, particularly with new partners.**

Condom use was high among all sub-populations. The proportion of individuals who had ever used a condom ranged from 59% of women in the representative sample to 98% of sex workers. Over 60% of men and 85% of women with a new partner in the past 4 weeks had used a condom with the last new partner.

**Condoms are not consistently available at sites, but they are available nearby.**

Approximately 30% of sites had condoms always available but condoms were available nearby 66% of sites. Half of site representatives were willing to sell condoms at their sites.

**Site representatives are willing to have AIDS educational programs at their site.**

Approximately 9% of sites had AIDS posters and brochures displayed at the site. Over 80% of site representatives were willing to have an AIDS educational program at their site.

**Condoms and syringes are obtained from various sources.**

Men and women obtained their last condom from a kiosk, pharmacy, or their partner. IDUs purchased syringes from pharmacies and other places. Almost 20% had obtained their last syringe from a trust point and another 20% from a friend.

**Male IDUs inject drugs frequently and often share needles.**

Over 70% of male IDUs had injected drugs in the past 7 days. One-third had shared a syringe in the 4 weeks preceding the interview. Half of male IDUs could get a new syringe whenever they wanted.

**Recommendations**

- HIV interventions should be implemented at sites where people at high risk of infection socialize, particularly at sites where these high-risk populations overlap.
- Condoms should be available at sites where people meet new sexual partners.
- Current programs promoting condom use need to be maintained.
- Efforts should be made to include young women who have recently arrived in the city in HIV prevention programs.